

Appl. S.N.: 10/671,147
Reply to Office Action of March 9, 2007

132071-1

REMARKS

This amendment is responsive to the Office Action mailed March 9, 2007 in which claims 1-43 were identified as pending and stand rejected. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration in view of the following Remarks.

Claim rejections under 35 USC §102(b)

Claims 1, 2, 7-9, 11, 14-23, 27, 28, 30 and 32-42 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Lee et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,657,650). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Although Applicants believe claim 1 as originally submitted is not anticipated by Lee, Applicants have elected to further clarify the language of claim 1. Applicants' amended claim 1 is drawn to a fluid-dispenser device for a washing machine having a wash basket movable about an axis and defining radii extending in a horizontal plane relative to a circumference in correspondence with respect to said wash basket. The claim recites:

at least two outlet ports positioned to direct respective jets of fluid into the wash basket, each of the jets passing through the respective outlet ports and having a distinctive exit angle relative to a respective radius in said horizontal plane, wherein the exit angle of a first jet differs from the exit angle of a second jet.

Applicants draw Examiner's attention to Applicants' FIG. 3 and paragraph [029] in which one embodiment of claim 1 is illustrated and described. As illustrated, fluid-dispenser device 200 includes a wash basket movable about axis 202 and includes radii 204 and 206 extending in a horizontal plane relative to a circumference 208. Each radius intersects an outlet port (e.g., 210 & 212) and each outlet port directs a jet of fluid into the wash basket. The jets form a distinct exit angle with respect to a respective radius where the exit angles differ. For example, radius 204 intersects port 210 to form angle α and radius 206 intersects port 212 to form angle β . It can easily be seen that angle α and angle β differ, which in turn allows the jets to maintain a generally parallel relationship with respect to one another.

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In contrast, Lee does not teach or suggest at least two outlet ports positioned to direct respective jets of fluid into the wash basket, each of the jets passing through the respective outlet ports and having a distinctive exit angle relative to a respective radius in said horizontal plane, wherein the exit angle of a first jet differs from the exit angle of a second jet.

Lee is directed to a washing machine having a spraying nozzle assembly wherein each spraying nozzle is circumferentially spaced apart from each other (as shown e.g., in Fig. 4). Although Lee mentions that the spray assembly is mounted to evenly spray washing liquid onto clothes, Lee attempts to spray the washing liquid toward an upper inner wall of the outer tub. In particular, Lee states that since each of the spraying nozzles alternately extend toward the inner wall of the spin tub, foam formed between the spin tub and the outer tub can be removed during the wash cycle. This can clearly be seen in Lee FIG. 5 in which the spraying holes 162 of the nozzles 160 are pointed downward and backward toward the inner wall of the spin tub. Thus, the exit angle of wash fluid clearly does not form distinctive exit angles relative to respective radii in the horizontal plane as claimed. For at least these reasons, Applicants submit that Lee does not anticipate Applicants' claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection to claim 1 be removed.

With regard to claim 20, Applicants submit that Lee does not teach or otherwise suggest at least two ports positioned along a common radius to direct respective jets of fluid into a wash basket, each of the jets having a generally parallel relationship with respect to one another. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection to claim 20 be removed.

Claim 36 is drawn to a method for delivering rinsing fluid to articles in a washing machine in a manner similar to that recited in claim 20. Applicants submit that Lee does not teach or suggest directing respective jets of fluid into the wash basket from at least two outlet ports along a common radius and configuring each of the jets to have a generally parallel relationship with respect to one another. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection to claim 36 be removed.

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Claims 1, 2, 7-9, 11, 14-23, 27, 28, 30 and 32-42 directly or indirectly depend from claims 1, 20 and 36. As such, Applicants submit that claims 1, 2, 7-9, 11, 14-23, 27, 28, 30 and 32-42 are allowable for at least the same reasons set forth above.

Claim rejections under 35 USC §103(a)

Claims 4-6, 10, 12, 13, 24-26, 28, 29 and 31 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee in view of Borzell et al. (U.S. patent No. 2,565,798), Kendig (U.S. patent No. 1,832,560) or VanDornick (U.S. patent No. 2,635,447).

Applicants submit that neither Borzell, Kendig or VanDornick cure the deficiencies described above with respect to Lee. That is, whether alone or in combination with Lee, none of the references teach each and every element of claim 1, 20 or 36. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 4-6, 10, 12, 13, 24-26, 28, 29 and 31 are allowable for at least the same reasons set forth above with respect to claims 1, 20 and 36. As such, Applicants request that the rejections to these claims be removed and the claims allowed.

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Any additional fees for this amendment are hereby petitioned for, and the Director is authorized to charge such fees as may be required to Deposit Account 07-0868.

In view of the foregoing amendments and for the reasons set out above, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the application are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that anything further is needed to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,



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